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Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III)

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Habitat III Asia-Pacific regional meeting

Note by the secretariat

The secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) hereby transmits the outcome document of the Habitat III Asia-Pacific regional meeting, held in Jakarta on 21 and 22 October 2015.



Outcome document of the Habitat III Asia-Pacific regional meeting

Jakarta Declaration for Habitat III: “Sustainable urbanization to accelerate development”

We, the Asia-Pacific national government delegations, as well as a wide range of stakeholders, including local and regional authorities, intergovernmental organizations, United Nations agencies, professionals, academics, representatives of the private sector and civil society, and women, children and youth, participating in the Habitat III Asia-Pacific regional meeting in Jakarta on 21 and 22 October 2015, generously hosted by the Government of Indonesia,

Having met to discuss the challenges and opportunities of urbanization for further sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region, ahead of the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III),

Expressing our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Government of Indonesia for the excellent organization of the meeting and our gratitude to the people of Indonesia for the warm hospitality accorded to all participants,

Welcoming the decision of the seventieth session of the General Assembly to approve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 11: “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”,

Hopeful that a new agreement on climate change will be reached at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Paris from 30 November to 11 December 2015,

Welcoming the call for action resulting from the Sixth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum and the Urban Youth Assembly, held alongside the Habitat III Asia-Pacific regional meeting in Jakarta in October 2015,

Bearing in mind the large diversity of the Asia-Pacific region, which hosts developed and least developed countries, highly and less-urbanized States, landlocked countries and small island developing States, as well as countries in conflict and fragile States,

Recognizing that, in the 20 years since the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), urbanization in the region has been extensive, resulting in 2.1 billion people living in cities and towns and the emergence of cities as drivers of economic growth, as well as a large and growing middle class, and also recognizing that it is a region with extreme inequalities, inadequate affordable housing and basic service provision, as well as uncertainty and vulnerabilities relating to global economic trends, climate change and natural disasters,

Mindful of the fact that the Asia-Pacific region has a unique, diverse and rich history of urbanization processes, city building and community organization, and agreeing to seek effective approaches, strategies and tools that are not only able to respond to the specific challenges of the region, but also contribute to addressing larger global issues,

Cognizant of the key role of well-managed and sustainable urbanization as a source of development and well-being of societies,

1. *Strongly recommend* that comprehensive, long-term and focused political commitment and leadership be promoted at the global, regional, national and local levels for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 11 and other Goals by operationalizing a new urban agenda for inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements;

2. *Advocate* a radical shift in the way cities are planned, developed and managed, with people seen as change agents rather than beneficiaries, which requires an integrated approach to urbanization that includes the effective deployment of appropriate and progressive urban legislation and policy frameworks, sound and innovative financing mechanisms, appropriate land governance, quality urban planning and design, and a strong civil society that is more effectively engaged in decision-making, as well as the implementation and monitoring of urban development;

3. *Recommend* the formulation of integrated, multisectoral and participatory national urban policies and strategies to provide a national framework to guide urban development in the medium and long term;

4. *Also recommend* enabling the creation of stronger linkages between urban and rural areas to achieve more balanced economic and social development;

5. *Encourage* the development of systematic solutions to maximize and promote the sustainable use of natural resources and reduce emissions while continuing to meet human needs;

6. *Reiterate* the need to strongly incorporate sustainable urbanization into the strategies to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change;

7. *Urge* the formulation of pro-poor and informal sector-focused strategies to manage urban risks and improve resilience, recognizing that disasters and climate change disproportionately affect the poor and marginalized;

8. *Encourage* the mainstreaming of disaster risk assessments into land-use policy development and their implementation in urban and rural areas;

9. *Call upon* national Governments and local authorities to develop and implement well-focused strategies and programmes to alleviate urban poverty and reduce inequalities, among others, through the provision of adequate land, affordable housing and basic services, including for informal settlements;

10. *Recommend* the design of appropriate policies and people-centred investments, taking into consideration the needs of all stakeholders, especially children, young people, women, older persons, the self-employed, informal sector workers, migrants, minorities and other vulnerable groups, so that they equally engage in, collaborate on, lead and benefit from future urban development;

11. *Emphasize* the importance of intergovernmental cooperation on incoming migration and displacement to urban areas;

12. *Call upon* all spheres of government to work collaboratively with other stakeholders to manage the increasing diversity and demographic complexity of our cities in order to reduce conflict and strengthen social cohesion;

13. *Encourage* actions to strengthen the social mix and diversity of cities, furthering cultural interactions, including through the promotion of affordable housing and urban renewal within cities;

14. *Also encourage* the promotion of historical heritage and cultural identity to foster the urban economy and liveability;

15. *Recommend* encouraging well-planned, productive and integrated city growth to ensure sustainable mobility, safe and accessible public spaces, including green spaces, urban regeneration and infill in order to contain urban sprawl, thereby promoting access to affordable, reliable and sustainable modern energy services and energy efficiency;

16. *Also recommend* planning principles for cities and human settlements to develop appropriate compactness and mixed economic use in the built area to reduce mobility needs and service delivery costs per capita, as well as harness density and economies of agglomeration;

17. *Advocate* taking the opportunities and advantages of advanced urban technology, including information and communications technology, to ensure equitable information access towards building transparent, democratic, “smart” and efficient cities;

18. *Encourage* deriving new and effective multilevel and collaborative governance systems to better manage the complex challenges of interconnected urban spaces and not be constrained by the limits of administrative and political boundaries;

19. *Recommend* filling the human, financial and organizational resource gap faced by municipal authorities in the quest to manage rapid urbanization, including through specific mechanisms to allocate direct resources at the municipal level;

20. *Urge* the promotion of the implementation of urban interventions based on sound financial plans using innovative funding sources and mechanisms, including the private sector and philanthropies;

21. *Commit ourselves* to promoting partnerships between national and local authorities, traditional leaders and other urban stakeholders, focusing on knowledge exchange, the formulation of solutions, policy dialogue and capacity development;

22. *Advocate* that urban development strategies include clear, transparent and measurable indicators that should be used to monitor and evaluate progress and achievement;

23. *Call for* enhanced South-South collaboration and the continued effective support of all United Nations agencies and programmes, as well as other international organizations, for countries in the development and implementation of their urban policies and strategies to create and manage a coherent and interconnected systems of cities, including metropolises and small and medium cities, that are sustainably integrated and synergic with their rural territories;

24. *Commit ourselves* to promoting the principles and the recommendations included in this Jakarta Declaration for Habitat III, ensuring that it contributes to the upcoming third session of the Preparatory Committee, to be held in Surabaya, Indonesia, in July 2016, as well as to the formulation of the New Urban Agenda at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), to be held in Quito in October 2016.